

COEUR D'ALENE PRESS

Hagadones step up for North Idaho students; Horatio Alger associate contributes \$500K for college-bound teens

Posted: Wednesday, Aug 17, 2005 - 08:11:26 am PDT

By MIKE PATRICK

Staff writer

COEUR d'ALENE -- While most of us are busy lamenting the fact that so few Idaho students go to college, Lola and Duane Hagadone have quietly been doing something about it.

Duane Hagadone, a Coeur d'Alene native and businessman, was inducted last year into the prestigious Horatio Alger Association, an organization comprised of Americans who overcame adversity and humble beginnings to achieve success. The organization's central focus is its scholarship program, awarding more than \$5 million a year in need-based scholarships nationally.

Hagadone, 72, never completed his degree at University of Idaho, but he and his wife are opening the door for many others to do so. The Hagadones are donating \$500,000 -- \$125,000 a year for the next four years through the Horatio Alger Association -- for need-based college scholarships to deserving North Idaho students.

"No child should be denied access to a higher education because of financial need," Hagadone said. "This program will provide many incredible young people here in Idaho with the opportunity to achieve their goals by making a college education attainable for them."

The Hagadones made their gift contingent on local participation. First, only high school students in Kootenai, Bonner, Shoshone, Benewah, Boundary and Latah counties can apply. And the scholarship funds can only be used at North Idaho College and the University of Idaho.

"If you think about it, our state is kind of unique," Duane Hagadone said. "California may have 50 or so Horatio Alger members doing this sort of thing. In Idaho, I'm the only one, so I want to make sure our kids have this opportunity."

Announcement of the Horatio Alger Idaho Scholars Program was greeted warmly by North Idaho College President Michael Burke.

"It's thrilling news," Burke said. "It's touching to see someone who has been so successful in life turn around and help so many others."

Burke said the scholarship program meets a critical need at NIC.

"The number one impediment here for our college is financial," he said. "We have one of the lowest tuitions, yet it's still a challenge for many of our prospective students. Our foundation gave out 340 or so scholarships last year, but that's just the tip of the iceberg. We could easily have done twice as many if we had more money."

While the Hagadones are footing the bill, they won't participate in the selection or distribution process. The program is being administered completely by the Horatio Alger Association.

For the school year about to begin, 50 North Idaho scholarship recipients have already been selected. The application process is now open for the 2006-07 academic year. To apply, go to www.horatioalger.org/scholarships.